



## Terms of Reference

**Title: Service Provider to conduct data collection for quality-of-care survey in Albania**

### 1. BACKGROUND

Health for All (HAP) is a project of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) of the Swiss Government and is being implemented in Albania since 2015. Its overall goal is “Albanian population benefits from better health due to improved Primary Health Care (PHC) services”. Since April 2023, HAP has been implementing its third phase (consolidation) ending in 2027. During the consolidation phase HAP is extending its activities in the territories of 17 Local Units of Health Care, including at least 120 Health Centers.

HAP has adopted a results-oriented reporting system in all phases of project implementation, focusing on outcome monitoring. The project conducted baseline and endline assessments for each phase. Thus, evaluation surveys of facility-based quality of care (QoC) were conducted respectively in 2015, 2018, and 2022. In the consolidation phase HAP, is continuing to implement activities that aim at improving primary health care services, and a cross-sectional monitoring of QoC through a survey is deemed beneficial and necessary.

The main objective of this study is to carry out an end-line assessment on the spectrum of the quality of health services in selected Primary Health Care Centers. The Study Protocol and Tools are submitted for ethical clearance to the Albanian Committee of Ethics in the Ministry of Health and Social Protection. Once the ethical clearance is issued, the data collection process will start. In this regard, HAP is looking for a service provider to conduct the data collection, logistically organize the survey and guarantee quality assurance of data collection firmly following the study protocol and the Terms of Reference (TORs).

### 2. AIM AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The aim of the consultancy is to conduct an electronic data collection for health facility-based survey in selected Health Centers (HCs), in Albania.

#### *Specific objectives:*

- Ensure human resources needed for data collection as per TORs requirements.
- Ensure full availability and training of human resources involved in the process of data collection.
- Develop pre-handled plans for data collection and agree on that with HAP before implementation.
- Ensure quality and safety of data collected for the entire process.
- Ensure confidentiality of data collected according to Albanian Law on preservation of personal data.

### 3. APPROACH

Data on quality of care from each selected PHC center will be collected by a **team of two data collectors**. There will be a total of **5 teams** for data collection, hence overall 10-12 data collectors (including 2 back-ups). It is predicted that the teams will cover all the selected facilities, and the data collection will take approximately 10 working days for 5 teams. The data collection will be conducted within 2 weeks. The process of data collection will be conducted throughout one full day from 7.45-14.40, from Monday to Saturday and be supervised by appointed field supervisors.

A breakdown of the workload is as follows:

No.	Local Government Units	Days in Urban areas	Days in Rural areas	Number of days of work for each Municipality
1	Berat	0	1	1
2	Kuçovë	1	0	1
3	Shkodër	1	1	2
4	Malësi e Madhe	0	1	1
5	Lezhë	0	1	1
6	Bulqizë	0	1	1
7	Korçë	1	2	3
8	Pogradec	1	2	3
9	Kukes	1	2	3
10	Durrës	0	3	3
11	Krujë	0	3	3
12	Peshkopi	1	0	1
13	Elbasan	3	2	5
14	Kavajë	1	2	3
15	Mirditë	2	0	2
16	Kurbin	1	1	2
17	Tiranë	0	5	5
18	Fier	2	2	4
19	Gjirokastër	1	0	1
20	Vlorë	5	0	5
21	Sarandë	1	0	1
22	Tepelenë	1	0	1
23	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>52</b>

Each team is composed of 2 data collectors, thus in total there will be 52 X 2 = 104 person-working days. Data collection will be done electronically through the administration of the survey tool (Open Data Kit (ODK)) on tablets. Data will be saved and transferred on daily basis to the designated server at the Swiss TPH in Basel, Switzerland.

There are three data collection activities and tools to be applied:

- Clinical observations of patient-physician interactions (*following the principles of protocols on prevention, management, and treatment of specific diseases in Primary Health Care*)
- Patient interviews, when the patient exits the health facility
- Assessment of infrastructure of Health Centre (*medical and other equipment,*)

It is expected that clinical observation of the patient/physician interactions will happen in the doctor's room. In parallel, exit interviews with patients using and exiting the PHC services will be conducted in an appropriate location near the health centre. The infrastructure assessment will be conducted at the end of the workday in the PHC.

#### **4. TO IMPLEMENT THIS SURVEY, THE SERVICE PROVIDER SHALL PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING SERVICES:**

- Select 12 interviewers (10 active and 2 backups) to be trained. HAP has the right to refuse to work with any of the selected data collectors in case there are sensible and adequate reasons.

- Interviewers involved with **patient-doctor observations and infrastructure** assessment **must** have medical background as per specific requirements of these practices (could be general practitioners, specialization students in Family Medicine, endocrinology, cardiology or at least students of the last year of medical studies). No other medical science backgrounds will be accepted for these two procedures.
- Contract the 12 selected data collectors (interviewers) with the envisaged tasks and remunerate them, covering also the associated costs for that contract.
- Conduct training of data collectors(interviewers) in collaboration with HAP designated staff (*2 days in class training and 1 day pre-test of questionnaires*). The Service Provider is expected to cover parts of the training related to use and maintenance of tablets, safety and security of data collected, data transferring and data quality and working plan management for the data collectors
- Ensure technical support with ODK and address changes in the questionnaire based on the pre-testing process.
- Develop and update available field work plans for approval by HAP.
- Organize logistics and technically contribute to pre-testing and finalizing field work plans.
- Conduct data collection in full compliance with the guidelines mentioned in the study protocol, including ethical requirements.
- Oversight of field data operations (implementation of work plan).
- Ensure timely transmission of electronic data to the central server (daily).
- Take actions, as required, and requested, to improve data quality through supervision, feedback from previous data collection days, etc.
- Provide all administrative and logistic support for data collection including transport, etc.
- Provide 2 (two) additional tablets<sup>1</sup> and technical support for electronic data collection. HAP will provide 12 Tablets and 14 sim cards for this survey.

## 5. TO IMPLEMENT THE SURVEY THE SERVICE PROVIDER SHALL PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING STAFF WITH RESPECTIVE QUALIFICATIONS:

### 5.1 A *Study Field Coordinator* is responsible for:

- Coordinate all activities and communication between project HAP, the service provider, and the team members on the side of the service provider, specifically the field supervisors and data collectors.
- Ensure all contractual agreements and standards, and that the data collection follows the procedures outlined in the study protocol.
- Coordinate the data collection logistic and ensure quality of data collected.
- Communicate with HAP project team daily related to data collection process and challenges.
- Co-train with HAP in training of data collectors and field supervisors, as described above.
- Develop the data collection work plan together with field supervisors and agree with HAP.
- Submit the final report that describes the work carried out by the service provider, including documentation on possible qualitative observations and a supervision report, is required. The report will not exceed 5 pages (excluding annexes) and will be submitted to HAP within a maximum of two weeks after the end of data collection.

The study field coordinator should have the following profile:

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<sup>1</sup>(Some referral specifications for the tablets if they are purchased: (**Core processor:** minimum 4; **System:** Android (minimum Android 5.0 or higher); **Memory RAM:** Min 1 Go; **SimCard:** Yes ; **Résolution:** Minimum 1024x600 pixels; **Screen size:** minimum 7"; **Photos:** minimum 2 Mégapixels ; **Langage:** English ;**Battery:** minimum 10h; **Hard Disk:** au moins 8 Go;**Connectivity:** USB 2.0, Bluetooth 4.0)

- Experience in quantitative primary, ideally electronic, data collection
- Track record in data collection of similar scope and complexity
- Management of data collection teams
- Good understanding of methodological aspects and data management
- Well-developed communication skills

**5.2 Data manager with IT background and experience with ODK.** The data manager is responsible for the technical implementation of the electronic data collection, including the electronic design of the questionnaire, the set-up of tablets and assistance in case of technical problems during data collection. *He/she should ensure:*

- Assist HAP to electronically accommodate the changes on the questionnaires, as per training needs (pre-test included), etc.,
- Technical support for the electronic data collection (tablet support, etc.).
- Ensure that all tablet data are sent on the server adequately, at the end of the workday.
- Assist HAP in daily quality check of the data where needed.
- Closely collaborate with HAP/Swiss TPH on technical issues.

The Data Manager should have the following profile:

- **IT background or extensive experience with electronic data collection, especially ODK, server management, data (and database) management and equipment (ex: tablet) management**
- Previous experience as electronic data manager for primary data collection
- Good understanding of methodological aspects and data management
- Advance technical skills in the use of tablets.

**5.3 Field-based supervisors.** *For quality control the service provider will recruit two field-based supervisors to provide the following services:*

- Get involved in the day-to-day data collection. They ensure that the work plan is implemented as foreseen. Keep good communication approaches with local authorities and data collection sites.
- Conduct field supervisory visits for quality assurance.
- Be available and answer questions from data collectors related to the implementation of the survey.
- Communicate with the HAP project team daily for the conduct of the survey as well as with data collectors.
- Verify the feasibility of field work plans and ensure that they are implemented as planned.
- Ensure that data collection is done in full compliance with the guidelines mentioned in the study protocol, including ethical requirements.
- Take actions, as required, and requested, to improve data quality. Transmit on real time the feedback from the previous day of data collection provided by HAP/Swiss TPH.
- Communicate regularly (at least once per day) with the study field coordinator and ensure the functionality and appropriate use of tablets.

The field supervisors should have the following profile:

- Previous supervision experience and involvement in primary data collection
- Technical skills and literacy in the use of tablets
- Good understanding of methodological aspects and data management
- Willingness to travel to remote places
- Well-developed communication skills

5.4 **Data Collectors (Interviewers)** are responsible for collecting the data according to the procedures outlined in the study protocol:

- Data collectors should participate in the training in data collection.
- They are assisted, and supported by supervisors, data manager and study field coordinator.
- They are obliged to keep regular and intensive communication with study field coordinator data manager, and supervisors as per emerging needs.
- The data collectors should be available during the data collection days, as per plan developed

In case of heavy ethical violation rules and conditions from the data collectors, HAP reserves the right to immediately inform the service provider for excluding this person from this study survey.

The data collectors should have the following profiles:

- **Must have medical background** (general practitioners, specialization students in Family Medicine, endocrinology, cardiology or at least students of the last year of medical studies) - **this requirement is a MUST and is not negotiable for Doctor-Patient Observations and Infrastructure Assessment.**
- Technical skills and literacy in the use of tablets
- Willingness to travel to HCs for ~2 weeks
- Well-developed communication skills
- Ideally: previous data collection experience

All the proposed team in point 5 of these TORs should be Albanian speakers.

**6. The following services are NOT required from the service provider and will be provided by HAP Project and/or Swiss TPH:**

- Design of survey protocol and data collection tools
- Provision and set-up of server
- Sampling of health centers
- Identification of facility for pretest
- Preparation for the training of interviewers
- Logistic costs related to **training** of data collectors, field supervisors, data manager & study field coordinator (lunch, dinner, accommodation and coffee break, training room rent, etc.)
- Tablets and sim cards will be provided by HAP (12 tablets and sim cards). *Two back up tablets will be provided by the service provider.*
- Ethical approval of the survey
- Analysis and reporting of results

HAP reserves the right to be directly involved in all activities of the survey implementation, specifically in quality assurance activities, which HAP might carry out in parallel and independently from the service company.

## 7. Timeframes and Deliverables

The tentative timeframes are:

- The signing of the contract will be after issuing of the ethical clearance by the Ethic Committee in MOHSP.
- Training for the interviewers will take place in the two weeks following the signature of the contract.

- Data collection will start immediately after the training of data collectors and last approximately 2 weeks, including Saturdays but not **Sundays**.

**The deliverables are:**

- Data collected as per TORs.
- A report in English that describes the work carried out by the service provider including documentation of possible qualitative observations and a supervision report, is required. The report will not exceed 5 pages (excluding annexes) and will be submitted to HAP within a maximum of two weeks after the end of data collection.

**8: Other business**

We estimate that the selection of the service provider will take place within 10 working days after the deadline. A contract between HAP (Health for All Project) and the selected service provider will be established covering the activities defined in these TORs and the respective remuneration. Please note, that the signing of the contract will be after issuing of the ethical clearance by the Ethic Committee in MOHSP.